

Bourdieu

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It follows that the most experienced connoisseurs are the natural champions of charismatic ideology, which attributes to the work of art a magical power of conversion capable of awaking the potentialities latent in a few of the elect, and which contrasts authentic experience of a work of art as an "affection" of the heart or immediate enlightenment of the intuition with the laborious proceedings and cold comments of the intelligence, ignoring the social and cultural conditions underlying such an experience, and at the same time treating as a birthright the virtuosity acquired through long familiarization or through the exercise of a methodical training; silence concerning the social prerequisites for the appropriation of culture or, to be more exact, for the acquisition of art competence in the sense of mastery of all means for the specific appropriation of works of art is a self-seeking silence because it is what makes it possible to legitimize a social privilege by pretending that it is a gift of nature.

To remember that culture is not what one is but what one has, or rather, what one has become; to remember the social conditions which render possible aesthetic experience and the existence of those beings--art lovers or "people of taste"--for whom it is possible; to remember that the work of art is given only to those who have received the means to acquire the means to appropriate it and who could not seek to possess it if they did not already possess it, in and through the possession of the means of possession and as an actual possibility of effecting the taking of possession;